United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1404
1 June 1993

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council extends reduced mandate of United Nations Angola Verification Mission for 45 days , until 15 July, 1993; stresses functions of good offices and mediation.

+ Two Danish truck drivers and one Bosnian interpreter killed and five others wounded in attack against UNHCR convoys in Maglaj, Central Bosnia.

+ Some 60 per cent of ordinary votes counted since Cambodian election ended; FUNCINPEC, with 42.3 per cent, leads over CPP, with 37.2 per cent; Special Representative, denying alleged irregularities, declines request for new vote in four provinces.

+ Secretary-General, in Rabat, meets with Moroccan officials in effort to seek solution to question of Western Sahara.

+ UNDP Governing Council begins 40th session at Headquarters; hears addresses by UNDP Administrator William Draper, UNFPA Executive Director Nafis Sadik and Under-Secretary-General Jean-Claude Milleron.

+ In Beijing, Preparatory Meeting for 1994 Year of Family adopts policy recommendations for family well-being; approves Declaration on family activities beyond 1994 and designates 15 May as International Day of Families.

* * *

The Security Council today extended the mandate of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II) for a further interim period of forty-five days, until 15 July, 1993, stressing the importance of the functions of good offices and mediation.

The Council took that action by unanimously adopting resolution 834 (1993) under which it said it would hold the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) responsible for the breakdown of the talks in

(more)

For information media--not an official record

Abidjan and for thereby jeopardizing the peace process. The Council warned that it would consider all appropriate measures under the United Nations Charter to advance the implementation of the "Acordos de Paz".

The Council strongly appealed to the two parties, in particular to UNITA, to reinstate as soon as possible the interrupted peace talks under the United Nations auspices with a view to the earliest possible establishment of a cease-fire throughout the country.

In a report to the Council, dated 25 May, the Secretary-General described the breakdown of the Abidjan talks between the parties as "a tragic setback" to the peace process in Angola and called for a decision on the United Nations future role in the country. He proposed that the mandate of UNAVEM II be reduced for now, with the possibility of strengthening it if the military and political situation improved.

In an addendum to that report, dated 27 May, the Secretary-General estimated that the extension of UNAVEM II would cost almost $3.66 million. The reduced Mission would consist of 40 international civilian staff, 50 military observers, 18 police observers, 11 medical and 75 local staff. He recommended that the costs should be considered an expense to be borne by United Nations Member States, and that the assessments levied should be credited to the UNAVEM special account.

Addressing the Council before the vote, the representative of Angola called on the Security Council to adopt sanctions to force UNITA to comply with its demands including prohibiting Member States to issue travel documents to UNITA leaders.

* * *

Two Danish truck drivers and one Bosnian interpreter were killed today and five others wounded when a relief convoy of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was attacked by an artillery barrage just outside of Maglaj, central Bosnia, UNCHR said today.

In a press release issued at Headquarters, the High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata said she was shocked and grieved at the recent "vicious, unprovoked attacks" against relief workers in the area. She strongly condemned the "cold-blooded attacks on humanitarian convoys", which, in the past four days, killed a total of six relief workers and left seven wounded.

The 12-truck convoy with Danish drivers from the European Community Task Force, which was attacked today, was the first UNHCR convoy to reach frontline Maglaj, where 32,000 people have been under fierce artillery attack since 20 May, the press release said.

(more)

In a related development, the Co-Chairmen of the International Steering Committee of the Conference on Former Yugoslavia, Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg, will travel to Zagreb tomorrow in the context of their visit to the region, the spokesman said.

Meanwhile, the Security Council held consultations this afternoon on a proposal to create more "safe havens" in Bosnia and Herzegovina. On 6 May, the Council declared six Bosnians towns "safe areas" and authorized deployment of an additional 50 United Nations military observers to monitor those areas.

* * *

More than 2,380,000 valid ballots, or 60 per cent of the total of ordinary ballots, have been counted since the United Nations-supervised election in Cambodia ended on Friday, a United Nations spokesman said today. The Front Uni National pour un Cambodge indépendant, neutre, pratique et coopératif (FUNCINPEC) had received 42.3 per cent of the valid votes, while the Cambodian People's Party (CPP) had received 37.2 per cent.

The spokesman recalled that the purpose of the election was to elect a 120-member assembly which would then vote on a constitution. Approval of the constitution would require a two-thirds majority. If the trend in the counting were to continue, he said, "there's going to have to be some bargains struck...because it's clear, based on these numbers, that no one party will have two-thirds of the numbers of a constituent assembly".

The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, met today with representatives of the CPP, which was "very unhappy with some elements of the election", according to the spokesman. They had asked for a new vote in four provinces, alleging irregularities in voting and counting. The Special Representative had declined the request, saying that such allegations would require evidence, and that the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) would answer any questions about the conduct of the election.

On Monday, an Uruguayan UNTAC soldier was killed and three other UNTAC personnel injured when their vehicles were ambushed by assailants believed to be from the National Army of Democratic Kampuchea (NADK), the spokesman said. On Sunday, 60 NADK soldiers had attacked a market in Kampot province, firing on a French UNTAC position and reportedly killing two local people.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali arrived yesterday in Rabat where he held meetings with Moroccan officials, including the Foreign Minister of Morocco, Abdelatif Filali. The Secretary-General, who will also visit Algeria and Tunisia during his trip to North Africa, is accompanied by his Special Representative for Westers Sahara, Sehabzada Yaqub-Khan.

(more)

In a brief statement to the press upon his arrival in Rabat, Mr. Boutros-Ghali said his mission was to try to find a peaceful solution to the question of Western Sahara. He said he had great hope that his discussions in the region would bear fruit.

In his latest report to the Security Council, the Secretary-General had stated that he would "make one more effort to seek a compromise solution on the question of the criteria for eligibility of applicants to vote in the referendum".

During his two-day visit to Morocco, the Secretary-General is expected to meet with King Hassan II.

* * *

The 48-member Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) began its 40th session at Headquarters today. In an address to the Council, UNDP Administrator William Draper said it would consider reports on Germany's proposal that the headquarters of the UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) relocate to Bonn.

Also addressing the Council today, UNFPA Executive Director Nafis Sadik said population issues, including family planning, must deal with individual choices, while population programmes must help empower women. Jean-Claude Milleron, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, said the issues of population, poverty and the environment were inextricably linked.

During its session, which will end 18 June, the Council will review the Administrator's report for 1992. In it, Mr. Draper stressed that while economic growth is necessary for human development, it must not be at the cost of future generations. He said people must be involved in all stages of the development process, while countries must embrace democratic principles and promote free elections, improve governance and safeguard human rights.

The Council will also discuss programme-level activities relating to the environment and development, women in development, regional economic integration and the Management Development Programme. In addition, the Standing Committee for Programme Matters will examine 27 UNDP country programmes and 15 programme extensions.

* * *

In Beijing, representatives of 25 Governments have adopted a set of policy recommendations to enhance the well-being of families at the United Nations Asia and Pacific Preparatory Meeting for the 1994 International Year of the Family, which ended on Friday, 28 May. The meeting recommended, among other things, that beginning in 1994, 15 May should be observed annually as the International Day of Families. The meeting also adopted the Beijing Declaration, which calls for the undertaking of family-related activities beyond 1994.

In closing remarks, Chen Muhua, Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, said the meeting would facilitate adoption of family policies in keeping with national conditions.

Eunice Reddick (United States) said her Government reserved its position on both the Beijing Declaration and the recommendations before the meeting, although it was in philosophical agreement with many of the statements contained in those documents. In her Government's view, parts of the Declaration and recommendations went against established international consensus. For example, the recommendations on family planning made no mention of the basic human right of individuals and couples to freely determine the number and spacing of their children.

The Beijing meeting will be followed by the Preparatory Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean in Colombia in August. The results of the two meetings, and previous regional meetings in Tunisia and Malta, will be presented to the General Assembly in December at a special meeting to launch the Year of the Family.

* *** *